

VZCZCXRO9102

RR RUEHBZ RUEHDU RUEHGI RUEHJO RUEHMA RUEHMR RUEHPA RUEHRN RUEHTRO
DE RUEHAE #0445 3651338
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 311338Z DEC 09
FM AMEMBASSY ASMARA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0655
INFO RUEHZO/AFRICAN UNION COLLECTIVE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUMICEA/JICCENT MACDILL AFB FL
RUEPADJ/CJTF-HOA J2X CAMP LEMONIER DJ
RHRMDAB/COMUSNAVCENT
RHMFSS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE

UNCLAS ASMARA 000445

SIPDIS
SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR AF FRONT OFFICE
AF/RSA FOR LOUIS MAZEL, LAURA GRIESMER, LEARNED DEES
DEPT FOR AF/E AND DRL

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: PHUM PGOV ER
SUBJECT: ERITREA: HUMAN RIGHTS TRENDS REGARDING SEXUAL
ORIENTATION

REF: STATE 137065

¶1. (SBU) In response to reftel A, homosexual conduct is criminalized under Article 600 of the Penal Code of 1957, inherited from Ethiopia, as an "unnatural carnal offence." Homosexual conduct is punishable by "simple imprisonment," which is reserved for lesser offences. In cases involving adults and minors, the minor is exempt from punishment if the adult is considered at fault. According to a high courts judge, Eritrea continues to prosecute individuals under Article 600 of the Penal Code.

¶2. (SBU) Eritrea is a conservative society that considers homosexual behavior a moral crime. Homosexuality is often met with ridicule and persecution. Because sexual orientation is not openly discussed, the size of the homosexual population in Eritrea remains unknown.

McMullen